6. 17.2 percent of industrial engineers are women; and

7. 7.2 percent of mechanical engineers are women.

These statistics show that measures need to be taken in order to promote women participation in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and to pursue careers in aerospace.

H.R. 321 will support NASA GIRLS and NASA BOYS, virtual mentoring programs using commercially available video chat programs, to pair National Aeronautics and Space Administration mentors with young students anywhere in the country.

NASA GIRLS and NASA BOYS give young students the opportunity to interact and learn from real engineers, scientists, and technologists.

H.R. 321 will also support the ''Aspire to Inspire'' Program (A2I), which engages young girls to present science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) career opportunities through the real lives and jobs of early career women at NASA.

H.R. 321 also promotes the Summer Institute in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Research (SISTER) program at the Goddard Space Flight Center designed to increase awareness of, and provide an opportunity for, female middle school students to be exposed to and explore nontraditional career fields with Goddard Space Flight Center women engineers, mathematicians, scientists, technicians, and researchers.

Let me close by urging all Members to join me in voting to pass H.R. 321.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 321.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROMOTING WOMEN IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACT

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 255) to authorize the National Science Foundation to support entrepreneurial programs for women.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 255

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that—

(1) women make up almost 50 percent of the workforce, but less than 25 percent of the workforce in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) professions;

(2) women are less likely to focus on the STEM disciplines in undergraduate and graduate study;

(3) only 26 percent of women who do attain degrees in STEM fields work in STEM jobs;

(4) there is an increasing demand for individuals with STEM degrees to extend their focus beyond the laboratory so they can be leaders in discovery commercialization;

(5) studies have shown that technology and commercialization ventures are successful when women are in top management positions; and

(6) the National Science Foundation's mission includes supporting women in STEM disciplines.

SEC. 3. SUPPORTING WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURIAL PROGRAMS.

Section 33 of the Science and Engineering Equal Opportunities Act (42 U.S.C. 1885a) is amended—

(1) by striking ''and'' at the end of paragraph (10);

(2) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (11) and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(12) encourage its entrepreneurial programs to recruit and support women to extend their focus beyond the laboratory and into the commercial world.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK) and the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 255, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I offer another bipartisan bill that Ms. ESTY and I have introduced, H.R. 255, her bill called Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act. We are joined again on this measure by the chairman and the ranking member, who are original cosponsors of this bill.

Our bill, H.R. 255, amends the Science and Engineering Equal Opportunities Act to authorize the National Science Foundation to use its entrepreneurial programs to recruit women and to extend their focus beyond the laboratory and into the commercial world. The bill also includes a number of findings regarding women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields, also known as the STEM fields.

One finding in this bill notes that women make up almost 50 percent of the workforce but less than 25 percent of the workforce in STEM professions. We want to make sure we can do everything to improve these statistics, and we believe this bill, along with our earlier bill that we voted on, is a step in the right direction.

Again, I have been happy to collaborate with my colleague, Congresswoman ESTY, on this important legislation for our young women so that they may look to the stars and realize their dreams in this important field that will really be important in the 21st century. I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 255, the Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act.

Our bill encourages the National Science Foundation to use its successful entrepreneurial education and training programs, such as the Innovation Corps, known as I-Corps, and Partnerships for Innovation, to inspire, recruit, and support women scientists and engineers who are interested in turning their laboratory discoveries into commercial technologies.

Mr. Speaker, you may ask: Why is it that we need a bill like this? We have these programs. Doesn't everyone know that we need more women in the STEM fields?

The answer is twofold:

Number one, we have a workforce shortage. If you take the field of advanced manufacturing by itself, in New England, there are 16,000 positions that are open currently. We have people who are looking for work—many of them women. They don't have the skill sets to meet that open job need right now, and that is a need for America to fill those jobs; so, number one, we need our qualified workforce with appropriate skills to meet the jobs of today.

We also need to think about the jobs of tomorrow. We are a wonderfully diverse country. Over half of our workforce is made up of women and people of color—historically, chronically, still—underrepresented in the STEM fields. There are problems we aren't even addressing and solutions we haven't thought of if we don't have more women with these power tools of the STEM skills to address the challenges and opportunities that this country is facing; so it is both a moral and an economic imperative that we equip more young women, and that is what our bill aims to do here today.

I have heard time and time again in my district, in which we have a lot of small startup companies and major universities, about this challenge that we face of bridging that gap between the laboratory and what happens in the commercial workforce. Through my work, I have formed a STEM advisory council and have met with them for the last 2 years. Among these are the problems they identified: limited access to capital, a lack of women mentors in the STEM fields, unmanageable expectations for work-life balance, and unconscious biases against women in the sciences. These are among the sorts of issues for which the I-Corps and the Partnerships for Innovation have been designed—in order to help close that gap to deal with these issues.

I want to give you examples of two of the women in my district with whom I have met who are benefiting from these programs and why we need to have more of them and the kind of difference that they will make.

The first is Zengmin Xia. She is a student at the University of Connecticut, and she helped the Wei Laboratory secure a National Science Foundation I-Corps grant to commercialize her work on tissue engineer scaffolds, innovative work which is going to help with bone repair and regeneration. She attributes her success to her female adviser and mentor, Professor Mei Wei, who encouraged her as a young woman to carry out her path forward in the biotech world. She helped her make that transition from the lab and the classroom out into the commercial world. She was lucky that she had a mentor with the experience to help close this gap.

Claire Leonardi is the CEO of Health Esense, which is a digital health startup firm in Avon, Connecticut. She received seed grant funding and gained access to hands-on training workshops to learn how to market her technology to consumers. She is now equipped with the tools to take her discovery and bring it into market.

Both of these women scientists are examples of the kind of innovation, the kind of economic engine, and the problem solving we need all Americans to participate in. That is what is at stake. That is why we are proposing this. This is not simply about having a poster with a diverse group of scientists to hang on the wall at the Air and Space Museum and inspire young people. That is important, but it is also important to build on the good work we have already done with the National Science Foundation—to really provide that equipment, those tools, those mentors, the training, and to take those lab discoveries, the basic R&D, and commercialize it.

I am very excited that we are reintroducing this bill. It passed with overwhelming support in the last Congress. Once again, sadly, it did not pass in the Senate, but we will start early in this Congress. I am delighted to be working again with my colleague, Mrs. COMSTOCK; with the ranking member, EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, who is here today; and with Chairman SMITH, who is detained with other committee work.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON).

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 255, the Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act.

The bill helps to build on STEM education and mentorship programs, such as those highlighted in the INSPIRE Women Act.

More women are pursuing STEM degrees and careers overall, but they continue to be underrepresented in many STEM fields. This is especially true in STEM fields with high entrepreneurship rates, such as engineering and computer science. Women who successfully complete degrees in these fields and want to turn their research and their talents into building new companies and creating new jobs then disproportionately face new hurdles, such as obtaining access to credit.

Unfortunately, because of these barriers, it remains as important as ever for our Federal science agencies to support programs and provide grants with the goal of encouraging, inspiring, and supporting women in STEM at all levels of their education and training, including entrepreneurship education and training.

H.R. 255 ensures that longstanding entrepreneurship education and training programs at the National Science Foundation continue to encourage and recruit women who are looking to move beyond the laboratory and commercialize the results of their research. If we are serious about growing our economy, it is just common sense that we would encourage all of our best and brightest—male and female—to commercialize their best ideas and create new companies and new jobs.

I thank my colleagues Representative ESTY for her leadership and Representative COMSTOCK for her leadership on this bill. I strongly support the bill and encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support it.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, once again, I thank Congressman COMSTOCK, Ranking Member EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, and our Chairman LAMAR SMITH, and I would urge my colleagues to support this worthwhile piece of legislation. It is wonderful to be able to start out the legislative session with important legislation that will help make a difference. Not only the lives of the individuals who receive these grants and this training but the entire country benefits when we have more women and more young women trained in these fields and able to operationalize and commercialize their discoveries to the benefit of all Americans and, in many cases, the entire world.

I urge my colleagues to adopt this and vote in favor of this important resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman ESTY and Congressman JOHNSON and appreciate their passion on both of these bills and their leadership and, once again, being able to join with them on inspiring the next generation of women leaders in the STEM fields.

As was noted by my colleagues, there is such a shortage of people to fill these jobs in general. Now this will equip more women to be able to be prepared in these important fields that will allow us to be leaders in the 21st century economy.

I would like to thank our staff—particularly we have our female staff here who have been very active on our bill, as well as a male. We are fortunate to have female leadership on our staff, also, and we thank them.

I know, in working on a program that I have had over the past 4 years, a young woman's leadership program, NASA, space, and astronauts have been some of the most popular people that our women in junior high and high school have liked to meet, hear from, and really be able to see themselves in those roles and to talk to women who have actually been leaders in those fields.

So I appreciate the opportunity to join with my colleagues now in giving that opportunity to the next generation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 255, the Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act. I thank my Science Committee colleagues Ms. ESTY, who authored the bill, and Research and Technology Subcommittee Chairwoman COMSTOCK for their initiative on this issue.

H.R. 255 authorizes the National Science Foundation (NSF) to use its existing entrepreneurial programs to recruit and support women and help them develop their research and technology ideas for the marketplace.

STEM education is critical to our country's economy and global competitiveness. A well-educated and trained STEM workforce promotes our future economic prosperity.

These STEM workers have the potential to develop technologies that could save thousands of lives, jump-start new industries, or even discover new worlds.

That's why I authored with Ms. ESTY the STEM Education Act, a new law that strengthens science, technology, engineering and mathematics education efforts at federal science agencies. It also, for the first time, expands the definition of STEM to include computer science. The bill was signed by the President in October 2015.

Unfortunately, studies show that only 26 percent of women who attain degrees in STEM fields work in STEM jobs.

H.R. 255 encourages NSF to tackle this problem. It enhances women's ability to translate their enthusiasm, scientific expertise and research ideas into tangible products and businesses.

Inspiring American students to seek science and math careers is a goal shared by Republicans and Democrats alike. Some of the most energizing and exciting moments of my Science Committee chairmanship have been interactions with young people who want to pursue STEM studies and careers.

At various Committee hearings and robotics competitions in my district, I have encountered motivated, talented young people who want nothing more than an opportunity to pursue their dreams. And, in some cases, change the world with their ideas.

Their passion for learning and science reminds me of why I enjoy serving in Congress and on the Science Committee.

I again thank Ms. ESTY and Chairwoman COMSTOCK for their work on this bill. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 255.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 255 the "Promoting Women in Entrepreneurship Act."

As a Senior Member on the House Committee on Homeland Security who sits on the Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Security Technologies, I know well of the need to encourage and train women to thrive in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields.

Promoting diversity in the STEM professions is more than just an idea; it requires an understanding that there is a need to have a process that will ensure the inclusion of all minorities and women in all areas of American life.

Studies have found that women make up almost 50 percent of the workforce.

Studies note that 23 percent of STEM workers are women; however, women make up 48 percent of workers in all occupations.

Only 26 percent of women who do attain degrees in STEM fields work in STEM jobs.

According to the most recent available data women are less likely to focus on the STEM disciplines in undergraduate and graduate studies.

In 1991, women received 29.6 percent of computer science B.A.'s, compared to just 18.2 percent in 2010.

Jobs in computer systems design and related services, a field dependent upon high-level math and problem-solving skills, are projected to grow 45 percent between 2008 and 2018.

There are approximately 6 million women and minority owned businesses in the United States, representing a significant aspect of our economy.

My home city of Houston, Texas, the energy capital of the world, knows the importance of professionals in the STEM industries.

It has been reported that the highest-paying STEM occupations are petroleum engineers with an annual salary of $147,520, architectural and engineering managers with an annual salary of $138,720, natural sciences managers with an annual salary of $136,450, computer and information systems managers with an annual salary of $136,280, and physicists with a reported annual salary of $117,300.

There is an increasing demand for individuals with STEM degrees to extend their focus beyond the laboratory so they can be leaders in discovery and commercialization.

Women deserve a fair shot in the STEM programs in this nation.

In addition, I believe that work needs to be done to modernize key contracting developmental programs designed to increase opportunities for women, minorities and low-income individuals who pursue STEM degrees and STEM job training.

I support programs at the National Science Foundation that have worked to reduce the current barriers and ensure women have the support they need in the STEM fields.

Mr. Speaker, we should encourage women to pursue degrees and careers in the STEM fields so we can continue to compete in the global economy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARCHANT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. COMSTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 255.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORT FOR RAPID INNOVATION ACT OF 2017

Mr. RATCLIFFE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 239) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for innovative research and development, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 239

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Support for Rapid Innovation Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. CYBERSECURITY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

(a) CYBERSECURITY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Title III of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 181 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 321. CYBERSECURITY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary for Science and Technology shall support the research, development, testing, evaluation, and transition of cybersecurity technologies, including fundamental research to improve the sharing of information, analytics, and methodologies related to cybersecurity risks and incidents, consistent with current law.

''(b) ACTIVITIES.—The research and development supported under subsection (a) shall serve the components of the Department and shall—

''(1) advance the development and accelerate the deployment of more secure information systems;

''(2) improve and create technologies for detecting attacks or intrusions, including real-time continuous diagnostics and real-time analytic technologies;

''(3) improve and create mitigation and recovery methodologies, including techniques and policies for real-time containment of attacks, and development of resilient networks and information systems;

''(4) support, in coordination with non-Federal entities, the review of source code that underpins critical infrastructure information systems;

''(5) develop and support infrastructure and tools to support cybersecurity research and development efforts, including modeling, testbeds, and data sets for assessment of new cybersecurity technologies;

''(6) assist the development and support of technologies to reduce vulnerabilities in industrial control systems; and

''(7) develop and support cyber forensics and attack attribution capabilities.

''(c) COORDINATION.—In carrying out this section, the Under Secretary for Science and Technology shall coordinate activities with—

''(1) the Under Secretary appointed pursuant to section 103(a)(1)(H);

''(2) the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies, as appropriate; and

''(3) industry and academia.

''(d) TRANSITION TO PRACTICE.—The Under Secretary for Science and Technology shall support projects carried out under this title through the full life cycle of such projects, including research, development, testing, evaluation, pilots, and transitions. The Under Secretary shall identify mature technologies that address existing or imminent cybersecurity gaps in public or private information systems and networks of information systems, identify and support necessary improvements identified during pilot programs and testing and evaluation activities, and introduce new cybersecurity technologies throughout the homeland security enterprise through partnerships and commercialization. The Under Secretary shall target federally funded cybersecurity research that demonstrates a high probability of successful transition to the commercial market within two years and that is expected to have a notable impact on the public or private information systems and networks of information systems.

''(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) CYBERSECURITY RISK.—The term 'cybersecurity risk' has the meaning given such term in section 227.

''(2) HOMELAND SECURITY ENTERPRISE.—The term 'homeland security enterprise' means relevant governmental and nongovernmental entities involved in homeland security, including Federal, State, local, and tribal government officials, private sector representatives, academics, and other policy experts.

''(3) INCIDENT.—The term 'incident' has the meaning given such term in section 227.

''(4) INFORMATION SYSTEM.—The term 'information system' has the meaning given such term in section 3502(8) of title 44, United States Code.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended by inserting after the item relating to the second section 319 the following new item:

''Sec. 321. Cybersecurity research and development.''.

(b) RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.—Section 831 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 391) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''2016'' and inserting ''2021'';

(B) in paragraph (1), by striking the last sentence; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) PRIOR APPROVAL.—In any case in which the head of a component or office of the Department seeks to utilize the authority under this section, such head shall first receive prior approval from the Secretary by providing to the Secretary a proposal that includes the rationale for the utilization of such authority, the funds to be spent on the use of such authority, and the expected outcome for each project that is the subject of the use of such authority. In such a case, the authority for evaluating the proposal may not be delegated by the Secretary to anyone other than the Under Secretary for Management.'';

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''2016'' and inserting ''2021''; and

(B) by amending paragraph (2) to read as follows:

''(2) REPORT.—The Secretary shall annually submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report detailing the projects for which the authority granted by subsection (a) was utilized, the rationale for such utilizations, the funds spent utilizing such authority, the extent of cost-sharing for such projects among Federal and non-Federal sources, the extent to which utilization of such authority has addressed a homeland security capability gap or threat to the homeland identified by the Department, the total